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A Christian Life.



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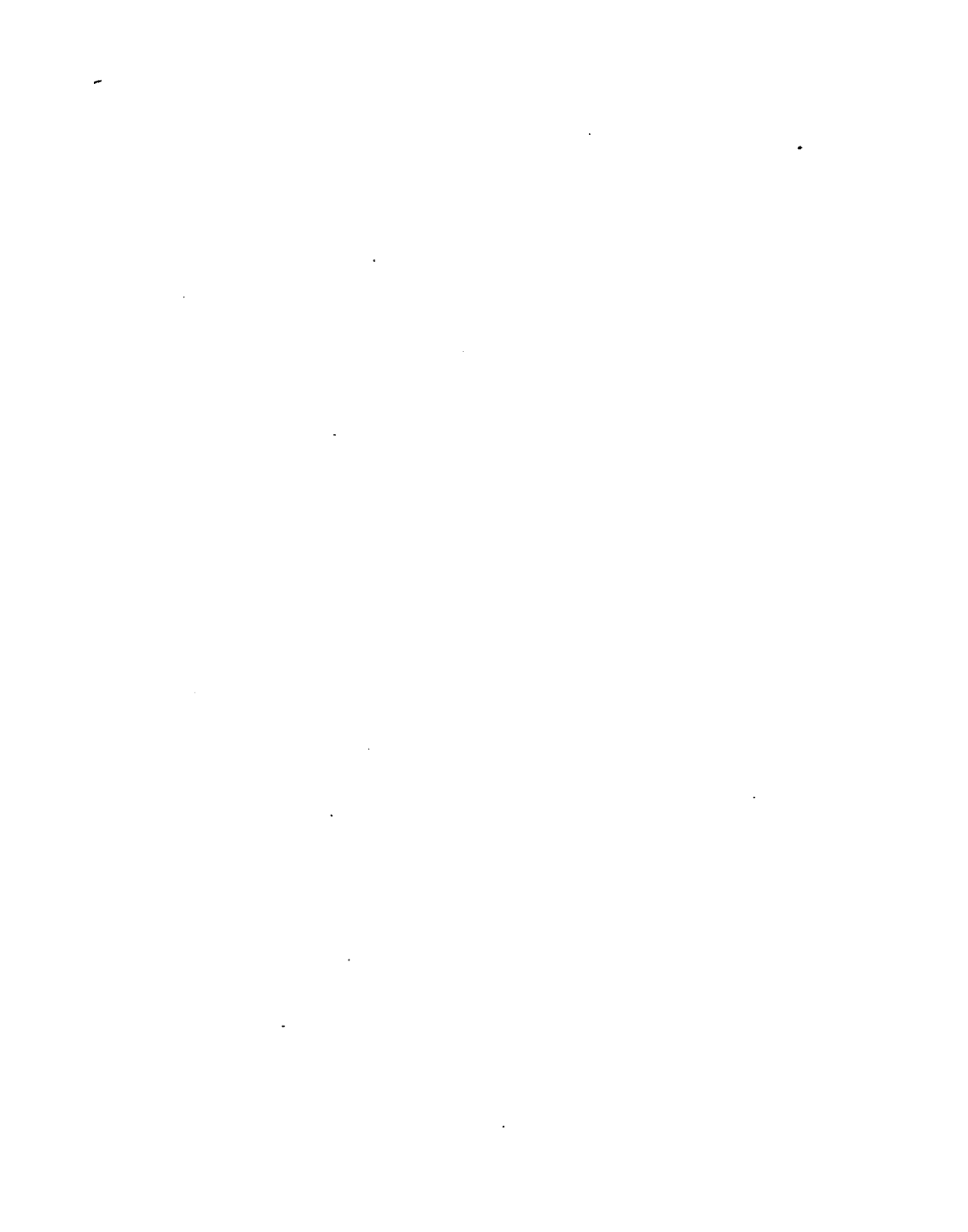
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A CHRISTIAN LIFE

AND ITS CLOSE:

A MEMORIAL OF

Alice,

THE WIFE OF THE REV. J. PACKWOOD, CURATE OF SUTTON COLDFIELD,
WARWICKSHIRE:

TO WHICH, BY KIND PERMISSION, IS APPENDED,

A Sermon,

PREACHED ON THE SUNDAY AFTER HER FUNERAL, BY THE REV. G. W. ROBINSON, M.A.
INCUMBENT OF WALMLEY, SUTTON COLDFIELD.

LONDON:
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TO THE
KIND CHRISTIAN FRIENDS OF

One

WHOM THEY ESTEEMED IN LIFE, AND REGRETED IN
DEATH,

This Memorial

IS RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED.

It is customary, on presenting a work to the public, to pre-mise something by way of introduction. On an occasion like the present this might, perhaps, with propriety, be dispensed with. The sorrow of bereavement is of too sacred a character to admit of explanation, and almost any expression of it is privileged to pass without animadversion. If a questionable step has been taken in sending these brief devotional exercises to the press, the transcriber of them trusts that every allowance will be made by Christian sympathy for this mistake. He received them as a wife's legacy to her sorrowing husband, and they are one of such a character, as to furnish an additional proof of her inestimable worth. They shew, undeniably, that her religion

was of the most sober and practical description. In them deep humility, faith, and love, are set forth as the utterance of the heart, and in this their excellence consists. All was a matter between God and her own soul ; and the transcriber is not aware that any eye, except her own, had, previously to her removal, passed over them. Their simplicity and godly sincerity form their chief recommendation, though they are not without value from their suggestive tendency, and from the practical lessons which they convey. Her own words express the solemn convictions and aspirations of her soul, in its secret communings with her God, in language of great simplicity and clearness ; and, in preparation for the press, a few words only have required to be altered, or struck out. Further suppression or alteration is now impracticable ; the transcriber would, therefore, bespeak the friendly judgment of the reader, and he humbly hopes that, with the divine blessing, a degree of good will be the result. Some serious mind may be decidedly influenced by the example ; and some already possessed with a kindred spirit of Christian piety,

may be encouraged to pursue and persevere in a course which will tend so much to their own spiritual benefit and blessing, to the honour of the Gospel, and the glory of God.

The Sermon, which is, by permission of the kind friend who preached it, now reprinted, needs nothing on the present occasion to commend it.

SUTTON COLDFIELD, DECEMBER, 1853.

" Our funeral tears from different causes rise :
As if from separate cisterns in the soul,
Of various kinds they flow!" From sorrow's fount
In grief-worn channels, see, at once they come
With gushing stream ; when sudden, like a dart,
The loss keen-felt the inmost soul pervades.
The vacant place, the melancholy blank,
All things enshroud in seemly, sable hue.—
The tender thought revived with touching force,
From pity's melting away again they rise
In deep commiseration at the thought,
That one so lov'd, so gentle, and so good,
Should fall a victim to the tyrant's pow'r
Unrescued, and submissively become
A prisoner in th' inexorable grave.
But more than aught beside, with keener pang,
The deep regret of things unsaid, undone,
The memory of conscious fault, the word
In misconception, or in haste, let slip—
Of unrequited good, the secret sense,
Of excellence unseen, the knowledge gained,
Will wring the very dregs of bitter woe

From th' anguished heart, and cause the scalding stream
Impetuous to flow—too late! too late!
The door now shut, communication closed.—
No selfish tears are here, but the torn soul
Its very self would give: for what? for breath
Again the helpless clay to animate,
That one short hour alone might granted be?
Ah, no! Let penitential tears then flow,
They soothe the soul, in sacred channel shed.—
The heart bereaved its desolation knows.
Blush not to weep, or pensive grief thee move,
Or sympathy, the finer chords of woe
So prompt to touch: thy great example see,
Thy pattern take—'t is human and divine:
When near the silent grave of sleeping friend,
JESUS WEPT.

Memorial, &c.

"TESTIFYING . . . REPENTANCE TOWARD GOD, AND FAITH TOWARD
OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST"—*Acts xx, 21.*

"Let deep repentance, faith, and love,
Be joined with holy fear,
And all my conversation prove
My heart to be sincere."

THE life of a real Christian, in its highest actings, is a hidden life. As the Apostle says of that eternal life which is the purchase of the Redeemer's work and sufferings, that it "is hid with Christ in God," so the life of the believer on earth, in its more spiritual and heavenly aspirations, is likewise hidden with God, and consequently is fully known only to Him. It is not the intention of the writer of these remarks to set forth an encomium of the character of one so dear to him, and whose virtues, even in a domestic view, might claim a special notice: his object is simply to magnify the grace of God, which was so eminently displayed in the life and death of the subject of this brief account.

As regards her history, it will be sufficient to remark, that MISS ALICE WILDSMITH was born in Derbyshire, and that

she came to reside with a relative in Sutton Coldfield in 1818, when in her eighteenth year. She has been heard to say, that at that period she knew little of religion. It is true she always thought it a matter of serious concern; but at the period alluded to, confessed that she was, as all naturally are, ignorant of the peculiar principles of Gospel truth in their genuine effect on the perceptions and affections of the soul. She observed the Sabbath, and attended Church, but there the business of religion mostly terminated: to faith and calling upon God she had not yet attained. The deep searchings of the heart were as yet unknown; and although there was an affectionate and amiable disposition, the power of the Gospel, in its awakening, renewing, and sanctifying power, was not rightly apprehended.

Some time after she came to reside in Sutton, she went for a few months to the town of Derby. Here she had the opportunity of hearing more than one eminent preacher, and it was here that she gained a clearer insight into the vital truths of religion, and a more enlarged comprehension of the doctrines of the Gospel. She then became more thoroughly acquainted with the sinfulness of her nature, and with the power and grace of the Gospel. It is not easy, even for the individual who is the subject of such a change, to describe accurately every stage of it: there were, doubtless, many struggles endured, and much weakness was felt, in the outset: many doubts and fears would, from time to time, impede the heavenward progress; and sometimes the world and its influences would have a retarding and deadening effect.

Still, however, the good seed sown did not perish; for it was the seed of eternal life.

It is a matter of general experience, that the Lord makes use of afflictions to refine and purify his people, and to promote their growth in grace; and this was eminently the case with the subject of these remarks. Possessed of a constitution not without some vigour, she was subject to violent attacks from a liver disease. The medicines taken were often of a potent description, and by being often repeated, and long continued, had the effect of producing great debility, from which, however, she from time to time in a degree recovered.

In the year 1833 she entered into the married state, her husband being the curate of the parish in which she lived.

This change introduced her into an enlarged sphere of useful activity; and under a deep sense of the responsibility of the position, she immediately addressed herself to the duties which a clergyman's wife may especially engage in, with a prospect of much usefulness. As a school and district visitor, she was most diligent, devoting a large portion of her time to the duties of the latter especially; and her attention in this capacity to the poor is gratefully remembered by many, although she had not latterly for some years been able, from want of strength, to continue her visits in a regular way.

In addition to what has been said respecting her engagements in works of usefulness, it may be observed, that she was the first in the parish of Sutton Coldfield who collected subscriptions for the Society for Promoting Christianity

among the Jews. She began this work and labour of love towards the descendants of the ancient people of God in the year 1823, and in that year the sum collected by her amounted to £1. 4s. 11d., and in the year 1851 to £14. 15s. 7d. This amount was reached, by a gradual increase annually effected, during the twenty-eight years, which shews at once the perseverance and diligence of the collector. She aided also in collecting subscriptions for the Church Missionary and the Irish Societies.

But as time passed away, how was it with her in regard to progress in the divine life? It may be thought, perhaps, that a person confessedly of so gentle a nature, so benevolent and sympathizing, and so generally amiable, and already under the influence of serious religion, would have little or nothing to regret or to be penitent for, in her frame and temper of mind, and even less in her walk and conversation. But she was no superficial disciple in the school of Christ. She was not satisfied with a fair outside, and that ordinary good conduct which passes current in the world. She knew that religion had its root in the deep recesses of the heart, and that its influence should be all-pervading, and that nothing should be thought, said, or done, without a reference to its holy principles. A few extracts from her own memoranda made at different periods, will throw light on this part of our subject.

She was in the habit of frequently retiring for secret prayer, and though she thought herself at such periods free from any human observation or notice, her earnest pleadings

at the footstool of mercy, could not be entirely concealed. The voice of intense supplication has been heard, when in the secret chamber; and though it seemed at times painfully earnest, yet she would come forth with looks of cheerfulness, and with her accustomed smile. She evidently gave a large degree of diligence to make her calling and election sure, and overcame the fear of death by *dying daily*. It is believed that this is no exaggeration, for as it will be seen in what follows, she endeavoured to make every thing in religion a reality, and not a mere notion or sentiment which is admitted into the mind intellectually, but is not relied upon as truth, and acted upon.

In order to evidence what has been stated, we will look first at her Confessions: secondly, at her Resolutions for Practice and for Amendment: and then at her Supplications for Mercy and Grace as these are found recorded in her own words, chiefly on loose pieces of paper carefully laid by, but discovered since her decease.

The object sought is a simple exhibition of the deceased in her own character, as formed by grace, and we shall find that she "being dead, yet speaketh" with a voice of admonition to all who read:

Confession.

"When I look back upon my past life, what a sad scene presents itself, of sin and folly, of pride and presumption, which is known only to the Lord, in wishing to be thought

so amiable—so every thing—of vanity, deceit and falsehood, and yet in such a way, as to really hide its true nature and sinfulness from me. Oh! my gracious God, what a monster of iniquity I am! Oh! my extreme sinfulness in thy sight! I am, indeed, a monster to myself, and what must I be in the sight of a holy God? And yet I have taken upon myself to speak to others. Oh! my God, be merciful to me a vile and miserable sinner, for the dear Redeemer's sake."

(Of an early date.)

This may appear to some like the confession of a person who had been grossly immoral; but no one who knew the character and manner of life of her who penned it will believe it to be such in her case. We see here the accusations of a tender conscience sensitively and spiritually alive to every deviation from the strict law of a holy God, whether in heart or in life.

Sunday afternoon:

"How graciously has the Lord spared me till now! How justly he might have cut me down long ago, as a cumberer of the ground. When I look back upon my past life, what a sad scene presents itself, of sin in all its *shapes*, especially of pride in all its various forms; vain self-confidence, vanity, seeming humility, and love of admiration: a want of a strict, conscientious, upright, honest, and just principle. I have not faithfully discharged the trust and confidence that have been placed in me, and I have allowed very improper motives to

operate upon me in various ways, which are known only to the Lord."

The same remark may be made as regards this acknowledgment. The matters referred to were, doubtless, what most persons would think of trivial moment, and scarce worthy of notice; not so the Christian who has been made sensible of the guilt and power of sin, and of its deadly effect in all its actings; he thinks no sin of trivial moment.

"Being poorly again to-day, and not able to go to church, I have a little more opportunity of examining into *my state*.

"May it be my *earnest and anxious concern* and endeavour to be brought to exercise true and sincere repentance, and a lively faith in the Lord Jesus Christ."

Sunday evening:

"I fear I have not as yet made much progress in the best things. Oh! when will it ever be that I shall be truly turned to the Lord? Time is making rapid progress, and I still seem as if I had never yet begun to live really as I ought to live—in all humility and godly sincerity. May the Lord turn me and I shall then be turned, and not till then, I am sure: and my dear husband, may he be truly devoted to the Lord; and my dear sister S. also." (1845.)

Sunday, January 2, 1848.

"Through the mercy and goodness of God I am spared to enter on another year. Oh! how the Lord has spared me year after year, and yet how far I feel from being in that

state in which I ought to be! The Lord only knows how matters are with me. Oh! may the Lord be pleased in His goodness and His mercy to reveal himself to my soul, that Christ may be formed in my heart, the hope of glory, this year. We know not who may be permitted to see the close of it; but may we all be stirred up to work while it is day; and may we all be more earnest this year than we have ever been, in seeking for salvation. May the Lord grant it for Jesus' sake.

"I would particularly wish to have my mind duly impressed with the following points:

"That the Lord would save and bless my soul, and my dear husband's. The need I have for an increasing knowledge of myself, and of Jesus Christ in all His offices: for a sense of pardoning mercy to my soul—for a lively faith—for holiness of heart and life—for a sanctified use of health or sickness—for diligence in praying for my friends, and for the spread of the Gospel at home and abroad, and that we may indeed be guided in all our ways."

Sunday afternoon :

"At home all day, not being able to go out. All these weeks are passed in this year, and I believe I am no forwarder. I have not followed the plans which I fully intended to do; and it is quite certain I never shall, unless the Lord by His special grace enables me. I hope I do feel convinced at last, that I have no power of my own. Oh! how very slow have I been in learning this truth, 'that of ourselves we can do nothing.' I really think it is my odious pride,

for that sin cleaves to me in every thing, in thought, word, and action. Oh! my gracious God, help me, a miserable sinner; I shall be for ever undone, unless Thou dost help me. Oh! send Thy blessed Spirit to enlighten a blind sinner, and to guide me into that narrow path of peace and holiness."

Sunday morning :

"At home this morning as usual. What a dark and hard state I am in; I really seem to have no feeling, and I am quite sure I have none. Oh! the really hard and dark state of my heart and mind is truly awful; so insensible to every thing that it should be alive to and that is right. I do seem as if I was living in a state of artificial appearance. I do think my state a very serious one indeed. Oh! my God, be gracious and merciful to a *most vile and miserable sinner*, and one quite helpless too, for if Thou dost not exert Thy Almighty power, grace, and mercy, I never can be brought out of this awful state that I am in—my state by nature so wretched, and by practice so extremely sinful!"

The expressions used in some of these Exercises of Confession and Deep Humiliation, may seem to savour of exaggeration, and to indicate a morbid sensibility of conscience. But there is no reason to believe that they originated from either of these causes. She was not a person liable to be influenced by mere mental excitement, or mental depression, being of a remarkably even temper of mind. Aversion to hyperbole and exaggeration, and love of the

literal truth, were marked traits in her character, and hence a strong disapproval of the evasions and the conventional forms of concealing or disguising the real truth in common use; and, perhaps, a betrayal into the prevailing practice, on some occasions, may account for some of the expressions which occur in the portions above transcribed.

"Blest are the souls that long for grace,
Hunger and thirst for righteousness;
'They shall be well supplied and fed
With living streams and living bread."

*Resolutions for Practice and Amendment, together with
Supplications for Mercy and Grace.*

The following extract is of an early date, and is headed
"Family Rules:"

"May my behaviour towards my dear uncle be always kind, attentive, and obliging; may I never more thwart, vex, or harass him, but study his comfort, his interest, and especially his *eternal interest*: may the Lord enable me so to do. May my behaviour towards Mrs. D. be always kind and respectful; and towards B. may I be enabled to behave in a manner strictly as I ought—to be kind, but at the same time firm, instructing her in every thing proper for her situation. In regard to myself and conduct—to speak the truth; always to make use of proper language; to rise early; to make much of time; not to speak of the faults and failings of

others, unless necessary ; not to be hasty in drawing conclusions respecting others ; not to speak hastily upon any subject that may require consideration. May I endeavour to check the hastiness of my temper and tongue, though under vexing circumstances. May I be patient under suffering, forgiving injury, kind to friends, and in every thing acting as a Christian and a follower of Christ ought to do.

“ O ! Almighty and most merciful Lord God, who hast created all things by the word of Thy power, who hast brought me into being, and hast kindly watched over me in infancy, through childhood, and to this present moment of my life ; yet how ungrateful have I been for all Thy mercies bestowed upon me. How mercifully the Lord has spared me, when I so richly deserved punishment, and now of His great mercy, He has been pleased to visit me with an affliction, and graciously He has supported me under it. Oh ! may it be sanctified to my soul’s eternal good : may I never lose sight of it, and if I am restored to health, may its good effect be felt, and acknowledged by me to my life’s end. Be pleased, O Lord, to grant it for Jesus Christ’s sake, and enable me by Thy grace to profit from it daily. May the blessed Spirit enable me to be more regular in private prayer, particularly morning and evening ; in reading the Scriptures daily, and other religious works ; in observing the Sabbath more strictly ; in attending the ordinances more regularly, particularly the sacrament, and in self-examination. Thus will I endeavour by the Almighty power and grace of God working in me, to will and to do of His good pleasure ; for without this,

I am not able to take one step—to give up myself to the Lord, to be disposed of in the way which may best suit His divine purpose. May I studiously endeavour to do my duty in whatever situation of life, Thou, O Lord, in Thy good providence mayest place me, and do Thou kindly watch over me in every condition of life : be Thou my guide through life, my support in death, and, finally, my everlasting portion.

“ O ! my dear and merciful God, be pleased of Thy great and tender mercy to behold my dear uncle, and for Jesus’ sake make him a partaker of saving grace, and grant that he may be among the number of the redeemed ; and, oh, visit my dear father and mother with thy great salvation.

“ By the help of Almighty God, with the assistance of His special grace, and the aid of the Holy Spirit, I will endeavour to observe the following rules : First, to set the Lord always before me, never to speak hastily, but to think before I speak, and to endeavour to attain a steady sedateness of character, and to express by words what I really mean : to speak the truth at all times, as far as I know it : to read the Scriptures daily : to keep holy the Sabbath day : to attend the Lord’s Supper once in two months : to keep good rules in the house : to encourage no tattling : to rise early : if unwell, to endeavour to get up in good time. On the Sabbath day to rise about six, read the Scriptures, and go to prayer before I leave my room : never to omit going to church twice a day, unless I have an excuse that will be sufficient at the day of judgment : to let my reading be principally the Scrip-

tures, hymns, or sermons : to retire once in the day for secret prayer, besides morning and evening : to attend to self-examination for the week : to attend the Sunday school in the morning, regularly if possible : to catechise at home in the afternoon.

O! Almighty and merciful God, look down in Thy tender mercy upon me, a miserable sinner, the vilest of the vile ; how many resolutions I have made, and how I break them ! it makes me very unhappy. With the help of the Almighty, I will endeavour to do differently : I cannot without His Almighty help. Oh, may He enable me to be particularly kind and attentive to my dear uncle : to read my Bible daily : to pray night and morning : to be strict on a Sunday : to waste no time, and to carefully endeavour to do my duty to all. Amen.”

(November 3rd, 1829.)

“ With the gracious help of my ever blessed God, I will attend to the following rules. The Lord only knows what He has to do with me, and how long I have to live : perhaps the Lord has decreed that I shall live for many years, and still my health be much in the same way ; as my complaint, I expect, will be a very lingering one, so it is useless my complaining and making much to do about it : I must endeavour to bear up under it, and must patiently submit to the Lord's will. May He graciously enable me to waste as little time as possible : to spend no more time in bed than is necessary, as it so much interferes with the duties of the day : to begin and end the day with prayer, and to read some portion of the blessed Word of God every day : to be kind, cheerful,

mild, affectionate, unassuming, endeavouring as much as possible to recommend religion, and, withal, to keep the heart close to God : never to speak ill of any one, nor to be ready to speak of scandal that may be in circulation, remembering that he that is without sin is to cast the first stone ; to endeavour to speak upon subjects more improving to the mind, and better for the soul : to pity the failings of others, and to condemn no one, but to be thankful to God if He has made me to differ ; and to pray for others, that they may be made partakers of the same grace : to be active in lending the *Jewish Expositor* and the *Friendly Visitor* ; not to be ashamed of religion, but to be firm and unshaken in it before any one."

(*This is of an early date.*)

October 19, 1838 :

" May the Lord grant that my mind may be deeply impressed with the importance of those truths which I have this day had the privilege of hearing ; and, first, may I always feel the importance of the work of *Missions*—of the duty of sending the Gospel to the perishing heathen—of doing all in our power as respects the giving part ourselves—and of endeavouring to interest others upon the subject also. Secondly, may I make it a matter of frequent and earnest prayer for their success, and for the success of all societies, for the spread of the Gospel in every way, both at home and abroad. But I should observe that the first thing to be done is, to devote ourselves to the Lord, and then to lay out ourselves for his work.

" The success of the Gospel in our own land, and in our

own neighbourhood, should be made a matter of deep and serious prayer, remembering the maxim, 'Prayer and pains will accomplish any thing.'

"Oh, may the Lord guide and direct me in all things, and enable me to do all with a simple view to His glory. May the blessed Spirit dig out of my heart all those roots of *sin, pride, envy, selfishness, and unbelief*, the root of all the rest, and enable me to do all from a right principle—the glory of God and the good of souls."

March 27th, 1844 :

"I have this day completed my forty-third year. The Lord has spared me till now, blessed be His holy name, for his *great* and *abundant* blessings bestowed upon me till this hour. They are more in *number*, and greater than I can express—His blessings both in providence and in grace, have been great in the extreme towards me."

November 22nd, 1846 :

"May I indeed feel deeply as I ought to feel, under our present circumstances, and may the Lord of His infinite mercy grant that I may truly and sincerely humble myself before Him, on account of our numerous sins and transgressions, negligences, and ignorances—our short comings in every thing, our unfaithfulness in many instances. O! my gracious and merciful God, how vile and sinful are we in Thy sight; oh! do Thou graciously look upon us in Thy great mercy, and for Thy dear Son's sake, forgive us all that is past, and do Thou be pleased to grant us true and sincere repentance; and grant that we may be truly humbled before *Thee*,

and that we may look simply to Thee for Thy great mercy in Thy dear Son : and do Thou be pleased graciously to direct us in all things : and condescend in Thy great and tender mercy, to guide us in all our ways. Enable us, O Lord, to look to Thee alone, and not to man ; and, O ! my gracious God, suffer not the enemy to ensnare us : Thou knowest our weakness, our helplessness, and our sinfulness ; have pity upon us, blind and helpless as we are."

Sunday morning :

" Surely, it is high time for me to make a more decided profession of the Gospel of Christ, and to live more devotedly to the Lord than *I have ever yet done*. How graciously the Lord has spared me from time to time, and yet how carelessly and negligently I have lived, and by my light and thoughtless mind, have not allowed the truth to have its due influence upon my heart and conduct. May the Lord, in His great mercy, pardon and forgive me, and give me grace and strength to turn to Him in sincerity and truth. May He grant this for His dear Son's sake.

" May I endeavour when I awake, to lift up my thoughts to God, and to pray for His gracious protection throughout the day, and for my dear husband. May I try to keep a watch over my thoughts, words, and temper, and to think of the Lord : I would make a point of reading a chapter, if possible, and sometimes Bogatzky, in a morning, and I would endeavour to set the Lord always before me, and not to be put about with trifles, but to get that calm self-possession, without slothfulness, which is so becoming a Christian.

"It has graciously pleased Almighty God, in His infinite wisdom and goodness, to remove my dearly beloved sister S. from us, October 16th, 1848. I humbly trust, that through His mercy and the riches of His grace, as manifested in His beloved Son, He has taken her to Himself, where there is no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. Oh! how I ought to regard this affliction as a solemn call from the Lord; to give up myself unreservedly to Him, which I feel as yet I have not really done, though I have felt at times most desirous, and fully resolved many a time to do, and yet I have fallen back and failed, to my great grief. In my own strength I know I cannot do this, and I shall fail again: but, O Lord, do Thou enable me to devote myself to Thee entirely: make me a real partaker of Thy grace, that Christ may be formed in my heart, the hope of glory. Do Thou give unto me true and sincere repentance, and an humble and steadfast faith in Thy beloved Son. Oh! how I ought to regard the solemn call, since the Lord has seen it right to remove her who was so truly dear to me! May He mercifully grant that I may bear the trial in a right spirit, and as I ought to do, and as the Lord wills that I should. Oh, my God, do Thou be graciously pleased so to sanctify this trial to me, that it may really produce in my soul, through Thy grace, all that Thou intendest that *it should*. Oh! my God, do Thou grant it for *Christ's sake*."

Sunday afternoon, January, 1849:

"It has pleased Almighty God of His goodness to spare me, and also my dear husband, to enter on another year.

May we spend this year as if it were our last; and it may, indeed, for aught that we know, be our last year on earth.

“O my God! enable me by Thy help to give up myself to Thee in all sincerity of soul, and do Thou be pleased to work in *me* all the good pleasure of Thy will: make me a real partaker of Thy grace. Oh! my God, be pleased to work in me true and sincere repentance for all my sins, and an humble and lively faith in Thy dear Son. May Thy blessed Spirit guide me, and enlighten my mind. May I be most careful to watch against all sin, and most anxious to put away all iniquity, and to cultivate all the fruits of the Spirit. May I put away all envy, malice, evil speaking, wrath, bitterness, revenge, slothfulness, idleness, and try to keep down all hastiness of temper, endeavouring to be *humble, patient, sincere, truthful*, keeping a watch over my tongue and spirit.”

Sunday afternoon, April 1st, 1849:

“The Lord has mercifully and graciously spared me to enter on another year of my short life. On Tuesday last, March 27th, was my birth-day. Oh! may God of His infinite mercy grant that I may, through His Almighty grace, be led very seriously to consider my ways, that my steps (if they are not already) may be truly turned to the Lord. And may the Lord grant that this blessed portion of His holy Word may be an encouragement to me to seek diligently in the ways of the Lord till I find Him.

“‘I will wait upon the Lord, that hideth His face from the house of Jacob, and I will look for Him’—*Isaiah* viii, 17.

“‘Therefore I will look unto the Lord; I will wait for the God of my salvation: my God will hear me’—*Micah* vii, 7.

“ ‘The Lord is good unto them that wait for Him—to the soul that seeketh Him. It is good that a man should both hope and quietly wait for the salvation of the Lord. It is good that a man bear the yoke in his youth.’ ”—*Lamentations* iii, 25, 26.

January, 1850 :

“It behoves me deeply to contemplate and seriously to consider our state and circumstances in the sight of a holy and heart-searching God. May not the things of time so engross our thoughts and time, as to leave us but little of either for the weighty matters of eternity? May that very solemn subject be deeply and seriously considered by me. The Lord has most mercifully spared and raised me up, time after time, and yet how carelessly, and negligently, and thoughtlessly I live.”

January 27th :

“Oh! my God, in Thy great mercy be pleased to look upon me, a lost and helpless sinner: turn me, oh! my God, from every sin: may I be truly turned and converted. May the *salvation of my soul* be the chief concern of my life. May I not look so much at others, but to myself, and that I myself walk in the ways of the Lord. Help me, Lord, to watch against sin of every kind. Merciful God! be pleased in Thy great mercy to help me by Thy blessed Spirit, for the dear Redeemer's sake. Amen.

“ Oh! my God, have mercy upon me, a sinner. I have neglected praying for *our Queen, and those that are in authority, and for our country*, and for God's special blessing upon

the means of grace, and upon the preaching of the Word. I have not prayed as I ought for my dear husband, that he may be truly taught of the Spirit, and that we may be truly made the people of God in all holy conversation and godliness.

“ O my God, what a sinner I am in Thy sight !. O Lord, my iniquities testify against me : they are more in number than the hairs of my head : but thou, O Lord, knowest them. O be merciful to me, turn me, and I shall be turned. Turn me from all sin : make me sincere and upright before Thee. O Lord give me a truly penitent heart, and a true faith in Thy beloved Son : and grant, O Lord, that I may become an humble and a decided follower of Him. Enable me to put away every thing that is contrary to Thy blessed will : may I ever be striving to be cleansed from all sin and wickedness, perfecting holiness in the fear of the Lord.”

March 29th, 1850—Good Friday, afternoon :

“ On Wednesday, 27th instant, I completed my forty-ninth year. Thus has the Lord graciously spared me through all these years, while numbers of my fellow-creatures have been called into eternity, and some of my dearest friends have likewise been called away, and have left a blank which no earthly object can *possibly* supply ; but the Lord saw good so to do, and I desire humbly to submit to His holy will. May it graciously please that God in whose hands our breath is, to bestow His grace and mercy upon me, that I may be brought to a truly penitent state, and that I may be truly brought to Him, the only true God, and to

Jesus Christ, whom He has sent. Oh ! my God, how very great and abundant have Thy goodness and Thy mercies been to me during all my life long, to this very hour. How mercifully Thou hast watched over me in every danger, and in every trial, and hast graciously provided for all my temporal wants. My temporal wants have, indeed, been abundantly supplied : O may the Lord be graciously pleased, in His great mercy, to pardon all my sins and transgressions for the alone sake of His dear and beloved Son : may He renew and sanctify me, and make me a vessel fit for the Master's use. I humbly desire the same blessing for my beloved husband ; and also, that the Lord will mercifully be pleased to take us specially under His gracious care and keeping, and dispose of us as shall seem best to His godly wisdom. Into Thy gracious hands, O Lord, do I most humbly desire to commit ourselves and all that appertains unto us. Amen.

“ ‘ When, gracious Lord, when shall it be,
That I shall find my all in Thee ?
The fulness of Thy blessing prove,
The seal of Thy eternal love.’ ”

“ I seem to make no progress in the ways of the Lord ; still in darkness, and much perplexity, in doubt and confusion of mind ! O Lord, undertake for me. May I be more diligent in prayer and reading. I have been sadly negligent the last month or two, in these important duties. May I be deeply humbled before the Lord on account of negligence and sin, and an untender walk. Turn me, O my God, and I shall be turned : draw me, and I shall run after Thee.”

Trinity Sunday, May 26th, 1850 :

" O my gracious and merciful God, how Thou hast in Thy goodness and mercy spared me to see a return of this day ; while so many of my friends and neighbours have been called into eternity, I yet remain as a monument of God's long-suffering and tender mercy. Oh ! that I might be enabled, by the help of His grace, to begin from this hour to live to Him who died to save me. O Lord, give me faith to believe in Him to the *saving of my soul*. Oh ! my God, look upon me in Thy great mercy, and help me, a wretched and an undone sinner. O look on my dear husband ; be pleased, O Lord, to direct and guide us in the way in which Thou wouldst have us go. We shall be sure to choose wrong ourselves : be pleased in Thy mercy to grant us true and sincere repentance, and a living faith in Thy beloved Son."

September 15th, 1850 :

" May the Lord mercifully enable me to observe these admonitions of His Word—' Be sober, and watch unto prayer. Be steadfast, unmoveable, *always abounding* in the work of the Lord.' "

September 22nd, 1850 :

" This day the Rector has read himself in—an important epoch in his life ; and my dear husband, through the mercy of God, I trust, and his good providence, has become curate again. Seven years have elapsed since Mr. B. died—a very material portion of our short lives ! and yet how quickly it seems passed away, and we are all that space nearer to eternity ! Some of the congregation have been called to

give up their account. How important the position to which we are called! O Lord, do Thou be graciously pleased to bestow Thy grace upon the young men: Thou alone canst guide them right—guide them into Thy truth.

“ Be pleased, gracious God, in Thy mercy to look upon my dear husband; O guide him in Thy way, and enable him by Thy special grace to preach Thy Word *faithfully*, and to live agreeably to the same, for the love and for the sake of Thy beloved Son. And in Thy mercy look upon me, and enable me to live as Thou hast directed Christian women to live—to ‘adorn the doctrine of God their Saviour in all things.’ We are quite unable so to live, and so to act, unless Thou art pleased, in Thy great mercy, to enable us, by the mighty power of Thy grace, working in us both to will and to do.”

November 16th:

“ O Lord my God, when shall I be entirely devoted to Thy service? I do feel it to be most important, and at times I am most desirous to be truly and sincerely devoted to Thee in body, soul, and spirit. Lord, do Thou mercifully help me with Thy special grace, and let me not go on month after month, and year after year, in this unsettled way. Satan keeps throwing me down, and pulling me back continually, and so I go on, week after week, unsatisfied, and at times very uncomfortable. Time is rapidly passing away, and I feel that I am fast hastening to eternity. O my God, do Thou help me, and have mercy upon me, and turn me into that good way that leadeth unto life. Grant, merciful Lord,

that we may be truly devoted to Thy service here below, that finally we may dwell with Thee above, through Thy dear and precious Son. May Thy blessed Spirit help me in all things."

November 24 :

"*' The Lord hath chastened and corrected me, but He hath not given me over unto death.'*

" This passage I feel to be very applicable to my own case ; and how deeply humbled ought I to be before God, on account of my innumerable sins and transgressions against his divine Majesty. Oh ! may I from this day begin to be really in earnest about the salvation of my soul.

" To secure that one great object, should be the first consideration with me. But alas ! how very different has it been with me, and yet the Lord has not given me over to death ; blessed be His holy name for His sparing mercy. May I be zealous and repent, and be truly turned unto Him in real penitence and faith. Oh ! my God, look upon me in Thy great mercy, and turn me from all my sins unto Thy blessed self. I fear that we are becoming very worldly-minded. Oh ! my God, help and have mercy upon us for Thy dear Son's sake."

1851 :

" Oh, my dear and merciful God, Thou hast permitted me to live through another year ! How very quickly it has passed away. Oh ! how little have I done for the cause of Christ !—indeed, nothing can I do. I did hope that I should have lived more devotedly to the Lord ; but I have not, but much in the old way as I used to do, and we are as we used

to be, which leads me to fear that my heart is not right with God. Lord, make me pure in heart; give me a new heart, and renew a right spirit within me, and mould me into Thy own blessed image. May the Lord bless us, by turning us from all our iniquities; and as it is my duty so to pray, so surely it is my duty to try to put away all sin."

"Duties to be attended to: To read the Scriptures diligently, a portion every day, if possible; to be diligent in attending the public services of the sanctuary; to endeavour to make the most of the Sabbath-day in reading the Scriptures, in prayer, and in profitable conversation," &c.

Sunday afternoon, January 18, 1851:

"On looking back on the past week, how much I have to lament before God on account of my lukewarmness in the ways of the Lord. O merciful Lord, do thou make me sincerely upright in Thy sight, and truly devoted to Thee in all things, for Christ's sake. Lord, help me to spend this week better: O send thy Holy Spirit into my heart, and teach me all things."

Sunday morning, January 25:

"The Lord has enabled me, I humbly trust, to be a little more diligent in His ways this week; and my mind has been more impressed with the importance of heavenly things. Oh! that he would be pleased in mercy to enable me to live in His fear, for Christ's sake."

Sunday, October 5, 1851:

"Oh! what do I owe to my good and gracious God in sparing me week after week, and year after year, when many,

both on my right hand and on my left, have been summoned into eternity! I have been spared as a monument of Thy long-suffering mercy and patience towards me, a guilty sinner. Oh! my gracious and merciful God, be pleased in Thy great mercy to look upon me, and enable me to come unto Thee, through thy dear and well-beloved Son. May I be accepted and blessed in and through Him. Grant, O Lord, for His sake, that I may be enabled, by Thy special grace, and the teaching and guiding of Thy blessed Spirit, to devote myself to Thy service in sincerity and truth."

Sunday, February 8, 1852:

"At home this morning. Oh! my dear and merciful God, I feel that I have got into a cold, careless state, the last fortnight. My mind and feelings have become very worldly and light: I have not been diligent in private prayer, and reading the Scriptures: I have not made the most of time, from one cause or other. I have been very negligent indeed, and have given way to a worldly spirit. Oh! my gracious God, be merciful to me, a very great sinner, and for the sake of Thy dear Son help me to watch and pray, lest I fall into the snare of the devil."

February 15:

"At home all day. I have been very poorly the last few days, with my old complaint. How very swiftly time passes away! Oh! that I could feel that I was truly in the right way, truly converted, and truly devoted to God, and my dear dear husband too. I think this is all that I really desire, as far as respects ourselves."

Sunday afternoon, April 25, 1852 :

"Through the sparing mercy of a gracious God, I am much recovered from my late indisposition of about nine or ten weeks. The Lord might justly have cut me down, as a cumberer of the ground, and that long ago."

Sunday afternoon, June 27 :

"The Lord has mercifully spared me until now. Oh! that I might but be truly and entirely given up to Him. Oh, when will it ever be that I shall be the Lord's—His humble follower? Other lords have had dominion over me : may they no longer have that power over me, but the Lord alone. May He indeed grant this, for His mercy's sake."

Sunday afternoon, October 3, 1852 :

"I have this morning been again permitted to attend church, after a long absence from indisposition, &c. ; but through the goodness and long-suffering patience of Almighty God, I am raised. Oh! may that gracious God, who has hitherto spared me, grant me His grace, and enable me henceforth to *live* in *His fear*, and to *His glory*. O Lord, hold Thou me up, and I shall be safe; for without Thy special aid I must fall. I have no power but to do evil. Oh! my God, help me, look upon me in Thy great mercy, and incline my feet unto Thy paths; write Thy law in my inmost soul, and *direct* and guide me by Thy holy and *blessed Word* and *will* in every thing. Grant these my desires for Thy great mercy's sake, and for Thy beloved Son's sake. Amen."

January 2, 1853 :

"Through the goodness and the long-suffering kindness

of the Lord I am, with my dear husband, spared to enter on another year. How great has been the goodness of the Lord during the year that is just past, and all the years of my short life. What amazing love and divine compassion are made known to *us* in the Scriptures of truth, respecting the mercy and love of God in giving His dear and well beloved Son a ransom for sinners—to undertake our cause, and to open a way in which we can be saved. Oh! dear Lord, put me and my dear husband in that right way, and all our dear friends. Work in us all the good pleasure of Thy will. May the power of Christ rest upon us, and by His grace working in us, may we be careful to put away all sin; to cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God. May I be truly devoted to Him, and give up myself to His service in all things.

Went to the boys' Sunday School this afternoon, and was enabled to speak to them. They were very attentive. Oh! that the Lord would be pleased, in His great mercy, for Christ's sake, to vouchsafe His blessing."

"Sunday, January 9:

"Very poorly; got to church in the afternoon, but not able to get to the school. Felt it good to get to the House of God. Spirits rather depressed."

Monday:

"Went with Miss W. to see old Mrs. S. Found her much improved in mind. Felt very poorly several days—a great difficulty in my breathing. On Friday, much relieved in that respect: bless the Lord for it! Altogether better, and out on Saturday afternoon."

Sunday afternoon, January 16:

"At church this morning: at the school in the afternoon. The boys attentive. May I be careful to redeem the time, and to live diligently in the fear of God, that no iniquity may have dominion over me."

Monday, February 14:

"Have been able to go to church in the afternoon, the last two Sundays. Have been very poorly altogether the last fortnight, or longer, so that I have felt some difficulty in retiring to read the Scriptures, and to pray. May the Lord be my help in all things. Half of this month is gone, and how little I have been able to do. Last week, not out at all, except to church on Sunday afternoon."

Sunday, March 27:

"This is my birth-day, which the Lord in his great goodness has spared me to see. Oh! that the remainder of my days may be spent in His fear."

May 15, 1853:

"Through the goodness and sparing mercy of God I am brought to see this day, Whit-Sunday. Many have been called away since the commencement of my illness in February. How the Lord has mercifully sustained, supported, and comforted me, during my illness: surely, I have had every comfort that I could have had: and now, through the goodness and mercy of God, I think I am recovering a little. The Lord alone knows what His will may be concerning me. Oh! may He work in me all the good pleasure of His will, and grant that His will may be enthroned in my heart, so

that the power of Christ may rest upon me in all things. Oh! save and quicken me from this state of coldness which seems to have come upon me. Oh! send thy blessed Spirit into my heart to teach and direct me in all my ways, and do the same for my dear husband also, and all my dear friends."

The following seems to have been an exercise for the Sunday School :

NINTH HYMN.

"How helpless guilty nature lies,
Unconscious of its load!
The heart unchanged can never rise
To happiness and God.

"Can aught beneath a pow'r divine
The stubborn will subdue?
'T is thine, Almighty Saviour, thine,
To form the heart anew.

"'T is thine, the affections to recall
And bid them upwards rise!
To make the scales of error fall
From darken'd reason's eyes.

"To chase the shades of death away,
And bid the sinner live!
A beam of heaven, a vital ray,
'T is thine alone to give.

"O change these earthly hearts of ours,
And give them life divine!
Then shall our passions, and our powers,
Almighty Lord, be thine."

"Three things ever to be remembered by us: What we are—What we must be made—and Who it is that can make us what we must be, and effect this mighty change in us.

"1st. What are we? what is human nature? and what does it deserve in God's hands?—(Art. 9.) It is also helpless—in itself without help: and, who is it that can help us?

"2nd. What must we be made?

"3rd. Who can make us what we must all be made? Who can effect this mighty change?"

"Man, in his unconverted state, is represented in Scripture as *dead*, as *blind*, as *deaf*—a slave in captivity—in *captivity to Satan*, the god of this world—as being in the broad road—as a dead branch—a corrupt tree—with a sinful heart (*Jeremiah* xvii, 9). Human nature is sinful. Human nature is also helpless, and it is God alone that can deliver and save"—*John* v, 25; *Ephesians* v, 14.

The following portions seem to have been copied, or noted down, as worthy of being specially remembered, and they harmonize so well with what has been already transcribed, that they may form an appropriate conclusion to the whole.

On Prayer.

"We should approach the Almighty God in a sense of awful reverence, with profound humility of soul, with the deepest self-abasement, and with an absolute submission to His will. Are you tried in your health, or by any other afflictive dispensation? Pray that the will of God may be accomplished by it—that you may discern the drift of His providence, may meet it with humble submission, and reap the blessing.

“ ‘ Mercy, good Lord, mercy I ask,
This is the total sum ;
For mercy, Lord, is all my suit ;
Lord, let Thy mercy come.’ ”

“ God will never look upon any sinner that is not washed in the blood of Christ—clothed in His righteousness, and renewed in the spirit of His mind in righteousness and true holiness.

“ These are matters that deserve our most serious consideration ; first, our need of *exercising deep repentance* before God, on account of our own individual *sins and transgressions* against a just and holy God, and our violations of His *laws and commandments, from our earliest years to the present hour.*

“ To hope for mercy without deep contrition, is in vain. God will not regard an unhumbled sinner. He tells us plainly, ‘ Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish ! ’ and it is the broken and contrite heart alone, that He will not despise. God calls upon us all in these words, ‘ Repent, and turn yourselves from all your transgressions, so iniquity shall not be your ruin.’ ”

Texts on Repentance.

Ezekiel xviii, 30-2 ; Acts xvii, 30 ; Luke xiii, 1-5 ; Romans ii, 4-6 ; 2 Corinthians vii, 9-11 ; Jeremiah xxxi, 18, 19.

Repentance the gift of God.

Acts v, 31 ; Acts xi, 18 ; 2 Peter iii, 9.

“ Life is a serious thing, and death is a serious thing. Life ought to be a preparation for *death* and *judgment*, and a *coming eternity*.

“ I have thought much about that calmness and absence of fear in the thoughts of death, grounded on a deep sense of God's supreme mercy and kindness. Now, if we attain this *through a believing*, appropriating view of Christ crucified for us, it is a most blessed and safe state, though even this will often be tried, and faith will be sorely exercised under the needful discoveries of inbred corruption. But on the other hand, a blind reliance on mercy, without having come to it in this evangelical way, will certainly prove a delusion.

“ But we should earnestly seek and desire to have this great work wrought in us before we come upon really a dying bed. To have these soul-wounds first deeply probed, and for the first time, to have the fountain of the deep of our nature's corruptions laid open to our amazed view, when on the verge of death and judgment, is no small evil to compete with. There is nothing I so much dread as coming short here, so as to be found on a death-bed, without having obtained a clear and distinct testimony of our pardon and acceptance in Christ.”

“ Guide me, O Thou great Jehovah,
Pilgrim through this barren land ;
I am weak, but Thou art mighty,
Hold me with Thy powerful hand :
Bread of heaven,
Feed me till I want no more.

When I tread the verge of Jordan,
Bid my anxious fears subside ;
Death of death, and hell's destruction,
Land me safe on Canaan's side :
Songs of praises
I will ever give to Thee."

The transcriber of the preceding papers from the pen of one whose loss he so deeply laments, will, he feels sure, be excused in saying that he was greatly affected in perusing them, as they had never met his eyes before ; and, in truth, of so humble and retiring a character was her religion, especially in its more spiritual actings, that much of what has been previously stated was but partially known or observed by him ; and of many of his beloved partner's services and attentions to the poor he knew nothing ; and with her mode of instructing and comforting them, he was almost equally unacquainted, for even when asked she seemed unwilling to speak of what she had said or done ; but having often observed that a favourable impression had been made by her visits, he inquired at times how they had been conducted, but he seldom succeeded in drawing out an explanation of her mode of proceeding. And as he was really unable to appreciate her services in her intercourse with the poor and others, her neighbours and friends, he was altogether astonished at her elevated conduct when the hour of trial came.

As was natural, the writer (when the time apparently drew near) had great anxieties respecting the final struggle, lest in the moment of nature's weakness, something distressing should occur. That she might ever be supported, and

pass through the conflict safely and consistently, was, indeed, his most earnest prayer. And, truly, if the expression may be pardoned, it may be thankfully said, that she met the King of Terrors with the most heroic fortitude, never apparently quailing at his distant view, or sensible approaches. The writer, to the best of his recollection, never heard her express a fear respecting death, nor an anxious desire to live : and on one occasion, on one of her last days, when he thought he perceived symptoms of uneasiness and a greater degree of restlessness, he said, Shall we pray that the Lord would give you patience ? she pleasantly replied, " Oh ! I am not impatient." But we hasten to note some of the circumstances of the closing scene as correctly as they can be recollected.

For many years she had been in the habit of spending a few weeks in each summer, among her friends in Derbyshire. She much enjoyed the quiet of the country ; and her native air and a milk diet, had generally the effect of restoring her strength in a very considerable degree. The spring was the season in which she suffered most from her complaint ; and of late years she was much reduced by the repeated attacks which at that time came on. For the two years preceding her decease, she had been very seriously affected in this way, and her consequent debility was very great. But the restorative powers of the change above mentioned had been very gratifying on both of these occasions. The spring attack of the present year, 1853, had been of a more serious character, and had been attended with symptoms which might well

create alarm in the minds of her friends. But it is wonderful how the human mind struggles against convictions unpleasant and painful to retain, and often succeeds in suppressing them. The writer of these remarks is ready to acknowledge his own weakness, and almost delusion in this way: for though he could not escape the obvious conviction, that unless a great change should take place, the powers of nature must yield, and the struggle must soon come to a close; yet, as a certainty not to be avoided, he was not able to contemplate it.

To proceed to the narrative of the events of the last days of her mortal existence: Mrs. P. had so far recovered from the spring attack, as to be able to get into the open air, which she always enjoyed, and found most refreshing and recruiting. At this season, however, it was manifest that the powers of the constitution were very greatly exhausted, and the vital powers were in a very depressed condition. Still she seemed to encourage the hope that the intended change, in the more advanced part of the summer, would be beneficial to her, if not as heretofore, yet in some degree; at all events, whatever might be her other feelings, she appeared very desirous of visiting her friends in Derbyshire once more; and on no previous occasion of preparation did she seem so intent on the journey, and so much taken up with the prospect of it. Accordingly, on the 26th of July she left Sutton by the railway to Derby, where she was met by her brother, who accompanied her to the house of a relative, the place where she was born, and where she intended to stay chiefly while she was absent from home.

The account which she sent of her health the first few days after her departure from Sutton, was not very encouraging ; still there seemed nothing to create immediate alarm. But, alas ! this brief repose, the offspring of what proved a fallacious hope, was soon broken. When about two weeks had elapsed a serious attack came on, which of course broke down the little remaining strength, and then symptoms of a truly alarming character shewed themselves. Medical advice and medicine were had recourse to, but, alas ! the vital powers were too far exhausted to be capable of an effective rally and reaction. Debility increased, and on the 22nd of August, her husband being greatly alarmed from an account which he had received, went with the anxious desire of returning with her to her home instantly, if possible. He found her a little recruited ; and as she expressed no wish to undertake the journey immediately, as the medical attendant rather advised, it was delayed a few days.

But the delay had well nigh been too long ; for her debility and symptoms of a more alarming character had continued to increase. It was therefore resolved on the 27th of the same month, after an anxious but brief consideration of the matter, to attempt the return without an hour's delay. The journey, through the goodness and mercy of God, was accomplished in about five hours, though not without a great effort on her part, and a consequent great exhaustion ; she reached Sutton about ten o'clock in the evening. The circumstances need not be minutely detailed. Suffice it to say, that seventeen miles had to be passed over in the ordinary way of

travelling, and twenty-four by railway, before she could enter her dwelling, and seek repose in her own chamber. It may well be supposed that this exertion drew hard upon her little remaining strength. She survived the effort eleven days; and during that time could only leave her bed for a few minutes at a time, while it was re-arranged. Most thankful, however, did she express herself to be upon being again placed in her own bed at home, and although undisturbed rest was not permitted to her, yet did she seem contented and happy.

In a day or two after her return, it was apparent that there was no improvement in her health. The medicine administered had but a partial success, and the little remaining strength was sensibly diminishing, till at length on the third of September it was thought useless to continue medical treatment. This circumstance gave an occasion for her to express her entire resignation to the divine will. Indeed, one most affecting feature in her illness was, her calm resignation, and her placid submission, to whatever should be the will of God concerning her. Though she was willing to live a little longer, if it should please the Lord, yet when her kind medical friend apprized her that medicine would be of no further use, she immediately responded, "The Lord's will be done." She then shook hands with him, and added her thanks and her blessing. She had said that she had passed a very anxious week after the attack which came on in Derbyshire, and which has been before noticed; and inquiry has been made of a relative who was with her, whether her

anxiety seemed to be on account of an apprehension of death, "Oh, no," was the reply, "she always said, in reference to that, 'The Lord's will be done.' " She was, however, desirous of reaching her home once more, and it may well be supposed that such a feeling would create anxiety under circumstances which seemed likely to prevent her doing so.

During the last days of her illness, she seemed to rise above herself, and above her extreme weakness, and without betraying any anxiety on other matters, would speak only on the best things, and endeavour to be useful to others as opportunity offered. A few instances of this kind were distinctly noticed and remembered, and are deserving to be recorded.

She enjoyed the reading of the Scriptures, and would frequently make observations on passages read to her by different friends. On one occasion a friend read to her the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah, and she noticed particularly the passage, "He shall see of the travail of His soul, and shall be satisfied." She observed to her friend, "Yes, He died for you and for me; for us, sinners; and 'He shall see of the travail of His soul, and shall be satisfied.' "

On another occasion, when the 107th Psalm was read, or a portion of it, she dwelt with particular pleasure on the verse, "Let the redeemed of the Lord say so: whom He hath redeemed out of the hand of the enemy, and gathered them," &c. "Yes," she said, "let the redeemed of the Lord say so."

When asked by a female friend, whether she felt happy; "Yes," she replied, "I feel quite resigned to the Lord's will, for Him to do as seemeth Him good."

She was fond of being read to, when able to bear it. The same friend read to her a very solemn passage from a work entitled, *Motives to Perseverance*, by the Rev. J. G. Pike. When the reading was concluded, she exclaimed, "Precious piece, precious piece;" and inquired what it was from, and was told it was from the book which she had herself given to her friend some time before.

To a friend who saw her on one of the last days of her illness, she expressed herself as having been often impressed with this passage in Ephesians vi, 18, "Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance."

On one occasion, a person who had expressed an earnest desire to see her, was brought into her room. Though in the extremity of weakness, she solemnly exhorted the poor woman to "seek the Lord," adding with much earnestness, "Do, Mary, do." And when the poor woman, in tears, said upon leaving, "I hope we shall meet in heaven," she said, "Call her back, call her back;" and upon her return she said to her in a very impressive manner, "Mary, that can never be, unless you seek the Lord."

On Sunday, September 4th, being in a state of great weakness and exhaustion, she said to her husband, "I must make an effort;" and after a considerable pause, from inability to proceed, she added, "How important it is never to lose an opportunity;" and then, after a further pause she said, "I wish to say something to *you*: I do not wish any one to leave the room." Then pausing again from exhaustion,

she at length proceeded, "I much fear that an impression will go about that merit attaches to works; but, oh, my God," she emphatically exclaimed, "I know myself to be nothing but a poor, helpless, hell-deserving sinner, and I have no hope but in my Lord and Saviour." And when some explanation was offered, she adhered firmly to the words which she had uttered, and desired that they might be made known as her testimony on the subject.

On another occasion, and again, an hour or two before she expired, she was heard to utter the same sentiment, almost in the same words, in ejaculations which proceeded from her spontaneously.

On one of these occasions, she laid a solemn charge upon her husband to exhort her own relatives in particular, to turn to the Lord; and she earnestly added, "Tell all the poor people, as you have opportunity, to 'seek the Lord while He may be found, and to call upon Him while He is near.'"

How perfectly in accordance with the greater part of her devotional exercises, extending over a large portion of her life, before given, is all that is here recorded; and especially that her dying testimony, which relates to her deep sense of sin, self-renunciation, her profound humiliation in the divine sight, and her entire reliance on the divine mercy, as manifested in the Redeemer.

It is not often that the descent into the valley of the shadow of death, is so uniformly easy and gradual as to resemble the description which she gave of her own perception

of it; when near the end of the *very* last stage of it, she pleasantly said, "I am on an inclined plane." Though on the whole she was mercifully exempted from agonizing pain, yet at times the symptoms were distressing, but all was borne without a complaint. On the 5th of September she suffered much from a violent cough for two or three hours; and on the 7th a sickness came on, which must have been as distressing as it was exhausting. After several hours continued sickness, as her end drew near, and when those near her seemed in some perplexity—perceiving that every thing administered failed to afford relief, and one said, What shall we do?—to the astonishment of those with her, she replied, "We must wait; we must wait the Lord's time." This was the last observation that she made. After the sickness had somewhat abated, and there appeared a prospect of a little repose, a prayer was offered up that the Lord would give, together with other blessings, rest and repose for the remainder of the night. Though almost entirely exhausted she attended to the prayer, joined in it, and added her "Amen." Having composed herself as for sleep, that repose followed which imperceptibly, to those who stood by, passed into an eternal rest!

" Asleep in Jesus! Oh! how sweet
To be for such a slumber meet;
With holy confidence to sing,
That death has lost its venom'd sting."

The pen of the writer might be well allowed to pause here, even if he had more to narrate. It was no part of his

undertaking to describe his own feelings ; were he required to attempt this, he should fail, and his failure would be such as to indicate his inability for his present task more clearly than any thing that he has already penned.

Awaked from a short slumber, the awful reality of the solemn change rushed upon him like a whirlwind, scattering every shadow of a remaining hope, tearing away every earthly prop, and reversing, as it were, all his thoughts.

It must suffice him to be permitted to express, by way of friendly suggestion to those who may peruse this simple Memorial, his deepened conviction of the importance of cultivating the tenderest sympathy with afflicted friends, and of seeking the most confidential intercourse with them in their affliction, so that when the final separation comes, there may be less of heart-rending regret on account of things which seem, through inadvertence, or any other cause, to have been unsaid or undone, the saying or doing of which, then appears to have been so highly desirable. Even in protracted cases of sickness, the severing stroke often comes unexpectedly at the last, and causes some sorrowing mourner to lament either his negligence, his ignorance, or his opportunity lost. Whatever, therefore, our hands find to do, whether it relate to our own salvation, or form part of our responsibility in regard to others, we should do it with our might, and without delay. And let us remember, that we have undoubtedly a great work to do, whether it respects our own souls, or the souls of others ; and who is sufficient for these things ? The ability must come from God ; it is only in the power of

the Lord, that they can really and effectually be done. A favourite Collect with the deceased (that for the fourth Sunday in Advent), may form an apt conclusion of this Memorial, and a suitable prayer for all who peruse it :

“ O Lord, raise up, we pray Thee, Thy power, and come among us, and with great might succour us, that whereas through our sins and wickedness, we are sore let and hindered in running the race that is set before us, Thy bountiful grace and mercy may speedily help and deliver us, through the satisfaction of Thy Son our Lord; to whom with Thee and the Holy Ghost be honour and glory, world without end. Amen.”

A Sermon

PREACHED IN THE PARISH CHURCH OF SUTTON COLDFIELD,
SEPTEMBER 18, 1863.

BY THE

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“BUT MAN DIETH AND WASTETH AWAY; YEA, MAN GIVETH UP THE
GHOST, AND WHERE IS HE?—*Job xiv, 10.*”

CALLED as we are, at present, my dear brethren, by the decease of one to whom grace was *evidently* given to live for Christ—to consider the universality of the reign of death; bearing his iron sway where even the presence and blessing of the Lord Jesus could not daunt him; we cannot do better, I conceive, than devote this morning to the endeavour of impressing our minds with the truth of death's wide and unexceptioned rule, and of our predicted and assured subjection to him. And, indeed, it is *not* unnecessary to do so; for of nothing do men appear so unmindful as of death.

Should there come, for instance, from some distant world to ours a being, wholly ignorant hitherto of what takes place on earth, until that being should see some person *die*, he could never gather, from the *conduct* of men, that death is amongst us a frequent and universal event. On the contrary, he would see men generally so taken up with the affairs of this life—the *old* as well as the young—so interested in

earthly concerns, and so intent upon seizing every favourable opportunity for pursuing this world's offers, that he would conclude, "Earth is the *constant* dwelling-place of man, and *never-ending* is the period for which he is *here* providing." A short residence among us would throw him into wonder and astonishment, and make his exclamation of surprise assume the language of the text—"But (notwithstanding all this industry for life) MAN dieth and wasteth away; yea, MAN giveth up the ghost, and where is he?"

Hence, my dear brethren, if men, for the most part, live so *visibly* careless of, and indifferent about the *subject*, then does it not become us to take advantage of such occasions as the present, and entreat you to prayerfully meditate upon *so true*, though so self-evident a fact as that—"MAN dieth and wasteth away; yea, MAN giveth up the ghost"—and then ask you to carry on your minds to the consideration of the important inquiry which accompanies the statement of that fact—"and where is he?"

I. MAN dieth and wasteth away! MAN, made after the similitude of God, the only reasonable being on the face of our globe, this *creature* dieth! Capable of looking forward to his decease, sensible to all the horrors of death, realizing to the full the deprivation of that existence to which it brings its close; able, alone, of all the creatures of the earth to become a priest unto God, to offer Him the sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving—such an one dieth! To none of his species is there any exception! or the exception of two only, Enoch and Elijah; this proves the *rigid* character of the rule, "MAN dieth."

But, my dear brethren, it is a *solemn* thing for MAN to die. For MAN was not made to die. Man was made to live, to live unto God, to live for ever. *But* man sinned, and therefore MAN dieth, and, consequently, from its very cause, MAN's death must be an event *most solemn, most serious*.

Man, you observe also, Job says "*dieth*." He employs no *softer* term than *dieth*. Nay, lest his conception of the thing should be mistaken, he goes on to enlarge upon it. He

expresses in a few words—though by those few words very *significantly*—the whole process of the event, “*and wasteth away.*”

Death, it is true, at a distance, and whilst we are in the enjoyment of perfect health, may seem a calm, an easy, an ordinary sort of thing. We picture to ourselves, perhaps, the gentle repose of our bodies on our beds: the tender farewell of our friends: the softly swimming away of our spirits into the regions of eternity. But man *dieth*, and, generally, *wasteth away*. The process is often long, tedious, trying, painful, harrowing. Ay, often, my dear brethren, man struggles with death. He heaves the heavy and labouring bosom—he pants for breath. The big sweat-drops roll down his cheeks, indicative of nature’s pangs. We look on, sensible of our weakness, incapable of administering relief, and learn from what we see before us, that in order to meet death, we *must prepare* for it.

Yes, death itself, my dear brethren, putting aside for a moment the consideration of all its unspeakably interesting consequences—death itself to be met, *must be* prepared for. “The enemy” is such that a whole life spent in arming to meet him, is little enough to enable us to grapple with him *advantageously*. To exclaim, “When I pass through the valley of the shadow of death I will *fear no evil*,” is permitted to those *alone* who can in *sincerity* appeal to their Lord and say, “Thy rod and Thy staff they comfort me.” Supports, ALMIGHTY and UNFAILING! *those only* will *then* sustain us. And O, then, that we could consider this, that we could consider *now* the things that belong to *our latter end*!

For the believer even “*dieth and wasteth away.*” He is not exempted from the process and pangs of *temporal* death. We might think that the Almighty would simply *translate* Him. For *God* having forgiven the believer all his sins, through the satisfaction of Christ; *God* having made known His indignation against this man’s transgressions in the sufferings of Jesus; and *God* having fully reconciled him unto Himself by the death and obedience of His own dear Son;

God having clothed him with a spotless robe of righteousness, and received him as His own child by adoption and grace—we might think it unnecessary, therefore, that God should manifest any further token of displeasure against sin, in any thing that befel the believer. In other words, we might think, since God is altogether for him, and every possible blessing is promised to him, that therefore the believer would be exempted from all of *sin's* consequences—at least *THAT of dying and wasting away.*

A CHANGE in the man, both in body and soul, we know is necessary, in order to fit him for God's presence and heaven's enjoyment. But if, by faith, the believer has an indisputable title (which he undoubtedly has) to God's favour, *through the merits of Jesus*; and if, by faith in Christ, he is assured (as he certainly is) that he shall be fitted *by God's Spirit*, both in body and soul, for the enjoyment of heaven; then why not, we might ask, why not let his body be changed, as the bodies of those saints who are alive at Christ's coming shall be changed—"in a *moment*, in the twinkling of an eye"—and he himself caught up at the time appointed for his departure, to be with the Lord for ever in glory?

But no, my dear brethren, no; for as long as this *sinful* world lasts, man *dieth*. When this *sinful* world shall come to an end, *then* God will put an end to His pledged determination; but until then—*man*, the collective species—*MAN DIETH*. The tabernacle of the believer even is taken down. *That*, defiled by sin must, like the house tainted with leprosy, be turned into dust and renewed. And in this act too God exhibits Himself, the only wise God. For thus He testifies to *all the world* the necessity of holiness. He shews to all the holy state of heaven, and the immaculate purity of the Divine character, by subjecting *even* the believer to death, in order that, while He purifies His soul by His Son's blood and His own Spirit, He may, at the same time, purge from the body also every touch of defilement, every admixture of evil, reducing it to the finest dust of the earth, so that a new

and purified habitation may be reconstructed out of the once gross, and defiled, and fleshly tabernacle of man.

For, even as *a man NOT born again of the SPIRIT cannot enter into the kingdom of GOD*, so is it *impossible for flesh and blood*, the polluted habitation of fallen man, to inherit, saith our Lord, *the kingdom of HEAVEN*.

The believer, therefore, *feels* the destruction of "this earthly tabernacle." Although supported, comforted, sustained, and upheld by Jesus, he has, nevertheless, to grapple with death. To him, as to others, is the passage from this world through "*the valley of the shadow of death*."

God exempts him not, because he would teach by his death, especially, a lesson to all others.

In the long and severe illness of our departed sister, for example, there was an end designed beyond her own purification.

It might have tempted some, looking at her for months, literally *dying and WASTING AWAY*, and after much meek submission to the will of God, learning from her kind medical attendant that medicine was of no farther use, thanking him, blessing him, and saying, "The will of the Lord be done," it might have tempted them, I say, anxiously watching her brought lower and lower, until, in *their* perplexity, *she* became their teacher, saying to their inquiry, What shall we do? "We must *wait*, we must wait the Lord's time;" and they yet had to witness, with vain attempts to mitigate it, her prolonged state of weakness, and sickness, and *wasting away*; it might, indeed, have tempted them to think God was unmindful, and had forgotten to be gracious. It was their hour of temptation, but of temptation only. For, in reality, God was not unmindful, neither had He forgotten to be gracious. He was, on the contrary, exercising, *graciously*, His servant, in order to *secure* to her *more* abundantly, afterwards, "the peaceable fruit of righteousness;" and most mindful of our eternal welfare also, by declaring unto us, through her sufferings, the evil nature and bitter character of sin.

He sat, like the refiner of silver, over against the fire of

affliction, watching its effects, carefully regarding His servant's welfare, suffering the flame to destroy, not her, O no! but the dross that clung to her; and whilst thus purifying her, teaching us, through the painfulness of the process to which He submitted her—the character of sin. For terrible, we thus see, must be its evil, polluting its defilements, when even the people of God are, as she was, brought, because of it, down to the grave.

But, my dear brethren, when we consider these things, *should not we prepare for death?* Seeing indeed what death is in itself, and that it is the only *certain* thing which can happen to *all*, O is it not necessary for *all* to prepare for it?

All admit the wisdom of providing for earthly prospects. The very facts of educating youth, of acquiring knowledge, of learning employments, of undergoing present toils and self-denials—those being submitted to because of their necessity, either to qualify us for future usefulness, or to render us capable of obtaining a livelihood in this world—*those very facts* are all lessons to us. For, in those things, very few are wanting. All, *upon such matters*, are urged, by *their* acknowledged NECESSITY *for life*, to exert themselves.

But, are *all* *sure of living?*

Nay! how *many* are cut off at the beginning of life! in the very midst of preparation for life! Nay, is there any thing *more uncertain* than life?

If, then, where such *uncertainty* finds place, it be wise to make any preparation—to prepare for *probable* life! how much more wise to make the absolutely necessary preparation for *certain* death!

How much more wise to ask—am I safe? am I at peace with God through Jesus Christ? am I born again? am I renewed in the spirit of my mind? has Christ redeemed me from all iniquity, and purified me to Himself as one of His peculiar people, zealous of good works?

For self-deception here, my dear brethren, is as certain destruction, as death is certain. And *certainly* “*MAN dieth and wasteth away.*”

It is a fact; there is no denying it. There it is of daily occurrence, happening alike to sinner and to saint.

And man, when he dieth, my dear brethren, "*he giveth up the ghost, and where is he?*"

Aye, *this* is the important question, *where is he?* And this, after all, is the *important fact*, "*Man giveth up the ghost!*" Those, together, make it folly in the extreme to neglect the soul, and be indifferent to the gospel of Christ Jesus.

For man, when he dieth, *giveth up the ghost*. The body, simply, is laid in the grave. *That* only returns to its dust. That which animated the body departs, quits its tabernacle, and leaves it *lifeless*. The ghost, the spirit, bursts from the shackles of the body, flies from its prison-house! and where is it?

Aye, where is it?

Why, it is *where* Christ is *lost* for ever, or for ever enjoyed. It is where the gospel is no longer proffered for our acceptance, but for ever realized *as truth*, either in its savour of Death unto Death, or of Life unto Life.

It is *where* grace is no longer spoken of, but where condemnation or glory for ever affects us.

Here, whilst the ghost continues with the body, God comes to us with offers of mercy; stretching forth the hand of reconciliation; entreating and beseeching us to be at peace with Him; offering us eternal life as His *free* gift through Jesus Christ; declaring that all things are now ready for our salvation and blessedness; assuring us that it is not of works, but of grace, free grace in Christ, immediate grace, yea, grace abounding beyond abounding sins. And this, brethren, was a matter which much occupied our departed sister's mind, viz., the freeness and fulness of God's abounding grace in Christ Jesus—a grace which she magnified for reaching unto *her*—rescuing her from nature's bondage, leading her to the knowledge of the Lord, bringing her to repentance, imparting unto her faith, succouring her in her troubles, sustaining her in her conflicts, and making her more than conqueror over all things in the end. It was, indeed, in *her*

estimation *abounding grace*—*grace* abounding beyond her felt abounding weaknesses, ignorances, corruptions, and sins. For many a year of her life she had been granted to experience its marvellous extent; and whilst praising God in Christ for having, through His free mercy, made her the recipient of it, and endued her with it, she ever ascribed to its efficacy all her hopes and all her happiness; and urged others to seek its enjoyment, through Jesus, as all-sufficient for *their* sins however great, for *their* necessities however deep, and for *their* ignorances however extensive. For, in the spirit of the Apostle, who said, "It is a faithful saying, and worthy of *all acceptance*, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom *I am chief*," she herself felt, that since God's grace in Jesus had been proved sufficient for her, then need none ever despair; but at once look to God in Christ for grace abounding above all their sins, and all their temptations, and all their accumulated wants.

Wherefore, my dear brethren, we pray *you*, in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled unto God: for now is the acceptable time, now is the day of salvation. This is the season of *grace*, of abounding grace.

When *man*, however, has given up the ghost, he is far away from a world of abounding grace—of grace at all. He is in a world of either condemnation irreversible, or glory imperishable; naked and undone, or clothed in the righteousness of Christ; and saved and glorified, he has stood forth amid the glare of the world of spirits! He sees as he is seen. The first flash of eternal light upon his departed spirit sets a marvellous scene before his vision, and manifests to him in a moment his meetness or not for the place of God's abode. Ineffable glory bursts upon his delighted gaze, enjoyed as the purchase and free gift of a loving and adorable Saviour; or he shrinks abashed at the presence of God, and cowers for refuge into terrible torment! The race is run; the fight is o'er; the contest's *ended*; *all* is done. There is no more return to this world, to retrieve a failure or remedy a fault. There is no opportunity for change, no

further scope for restoration. The tree has fallen, and as it lies, so must it lie for ever!

Pardon, and peace, and glory, if not possessed in *time*, are, in *eternity*, at an unapproachable distance from the departed spirit.

Yes, my dear brethren, *man*, when he has given up the ghost, is gone where all regrets, and all desires, and all prayers for grace and mercy, are useless—*utterly* useless; where, indeed, their experienced uselessness aggravates only our misery. To cry and secure no sympathy; to beseech, entreat, and pray, and obtain not the slightest sign of regard, or token of any thing but righteous wrath and irreversible condemnation; such is the lot of the lost soul! It is *where* all prayers, all desires, however ardent, are unavailing.

No, my dear brethren, *now* is the time, the legitimate time, for purposes, desires, and prayers. *Here* such must be cherished, and that carefully. Beware how you stifle them. They do occasionally possess your souls. Yes, I am bold to say, that each of you, if not already brought to Christ through grace, mean to repent *before* you die. Not one of you really thinks, seriously thinks, that he shall be lost! Although you do not profess to be ready just at present, you, nevertheless, suffer Satan to beguile you, *when* he whispers day by day of the "*more convenient season*."

Each of you has some *plausible* excuse, some specious subterfuge.

However much you may be now absorbed in pleasure, immured in business, or involved in dissipation, and *so* the fit time for the care of the soul be not the present, yet you entertain a secret conviction that its concerns do deserve attention; and occasionally, so strong and teasing is *the conviction*, that you put it off with promises, and purposes, and intentions of turning to God some day hence. At least, you resolve that when sickness comes and death draws nigh, you will seek of the Lord Jesus the salvation of your soul.

My dear brethren, THOUSANDS who have given up the ghost, thought as you do. They entertained purposes and

resolves like yours. The young waited only till they should be settled in life, or till their children should be older, and leave them more at leisure to follow the dictates of their better judgment; and those who were choked with earthly cares, waited only till they should be able to retire from the world, and devote a due measure of their attention to heavenly things.

But—the day closed upon them: and the night came, in which no man can work: and their souls having been required of them when they did not expect it, their hopes were *never* realized—their desires were *never* accomplished—their souls were *never saved*!

So impressed about *that* also was our departed sister, that when one who much wished to see her, was admitted to her presence, and, with tears, expressed a hope that they should meet again in heaven, and was going out of the room—"Call her back," said the dying Christian, "call her back;"—and when she again came nigh her bed, she emphatically and seriously said to her, "*THAT can NEVER be unless YOU SEEK the LORD.*"

O! then, my dear brethren, that instead of being so deceived, it might be granted unto you, now in this acceptable time, in this day of salvation, to turn to Christ Jesus, your gracious Lord, and seek of Him the salvation of your souls—TO BELIEVE IN HIM AND LIVE. For then death would not come, bringing only disappointment to unfounded hopes, and loss to deceived hearts, but bearing a summons to enter into the presence and glory of a Lord whose word relied on, and whose work trusted in, are props of everlasting strength to the departing soul. And *then*, too, when, after we are gone, it shall be asked, "Where is he?" why then there would be left behind us evidences of our having been enabled to believe in and live for Jesus, similar to those we are, thank God, enabled to look back upon in the life of her whose death has given rise to this discourse—evidences enabling those who remain to answer that question, not as persons sorrowing without hope, but as persons sustained in

their sorrow by a hope amounting to as much assurance as fallible man may be permitted to entertain concerning the departed.

For we must always meet this question, "Where is he?" by another, "What was he? What was he in principle? What was he in heart? What was he in life?" I would not indeed limit either the free sovereignty of God's grace, or the infinite extent of the righteousness of Christ, or the almighty efficacy of the Holy Spirit's operations. I believe they are such as can rescue a thief in the agonies of death, bring him to repentance, endue him with faith, cover all his sins, purify his soul, and snatching him from the very jaws of destruction, carry him to glory and happiness in the eternal world. "Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved," is a truth at the hour of death, as well as in the hey-day of life. Nevertheless, brethren, the evidences of grace are best gathered *by us* from the character of a man's life. Indeed, so deceptive are the expressions of a sick-bed, and a dying hour, and so true are the exhibitions of faith, by its fruits in a man's life, that although grateful to see any thing *like* godly sorrow and faith in Jesus, on a death-bed, yet I would always ask, not so much how did a man die? but how did he live? Did he live by faith in Jesus?—looking unto Jesus? learning of Jesus? clinging unto Jesus? rejoicing in Jesus? devoting himself to Jesus? ascribing all the glory of his salvation unto Jesus? *Then*, if so, thank God, when you ask me, "Where is he?" With good hope, nay, *unhesitatingly*, I say to you, "*He is WITH Jesus in Paradise!*"

And that we may follow, in mind, our departed sister *thither*, I will mention a few things which, while they justify us in conceiving her *there*, may, through God's blessing, urge us to follow her, not simply by *imagination, into Paradise*, but also in *that course of faith and patience* which we believe, assuredly, has ended *there*.

Her manner of life then was, I doubt not, as well known to many of you as it was to myself; or if, as one said to me

the other day, *few* are aware of the self-denying character of it, because of the grace of God which was given to her, leading her to seek, not man's notice, but her Lord's glory: *then* I am justified in declaring to you that the tenor of her life, for many a year, bears out what one most intimate with her thus wrote to me of her after her death: "The leading features in her character seem to have been simplicity of faith, singleness of purpose, unwavering confidence, and great perseverance." "I have known her," said also another person to whom I was lately speaking of her, "twenty years certainly. When I first became acquainted with her, I considered her a spiritually-minded person, quickening others by her conduct and conversation; and I believe her to have been, throughout the period I mention, an humble-minded, devoted, consistent *Christian*."

Her persevering efforts to be useful, spiritually and temporally, to her poorer neighbours, will, I am sure, be gratefully remembered by them; and indeed many are the testimonies I have heard borne by them to her patient, persevering, unostentatious, and self-denying labours of love on their behalf. The salvation of their souls was an object into which she could fully enter, both because she knew what Christ had done for them, and because she knew, from what had taken place in herself, their manifold wants and imminent danger. And for their bodies she was, in measure, mindful, urged by the love of Christ, and sympathy with poor, suffering, and sinful human nature, to try and mitigate their trials to the utmost of her power.

Possessing but imperfect health, she was, nevertheless, enabled to be in labours abundant beyond many; proving that it was not a mere expression, but a *gracious principle* expressed, when she urged others to *persevere* unto the end. Indeed, looking back upon her life, we are assured we do not follow a cunningly devised fable, but have seen in her the power of that Gospel, an epitome of which is thus given us by St. Paul, and illustrated by her: "*The grace of God, which bringeth salvation, hath appeared unto all men, teaching*"

us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; looking for that blessed hope and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ, who gave Himself for us that He might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto Himself a peculiar people, ZEALOUS OF GOOD WORKS." What she was granted to be in life, *that* was she enabled to be in death—the same, upheld by the Lord, and devoted to Him, persevering unto the end. For when she was in great weakness, so late back only as this day fortnight, she said, "I must make an effort;" and after a pause from inability to proceed, she added, "*how important it is never to lose an opportunity!*"

And at another time, shortly before her death, she expressed herself as having been often much impressed with this passage of Scripture—"Watching thereunto with ALL PERSEVERANCE."

Calm and resigned to the stroke of death, she waited the Lord's leisure, willing to live a little longer, or willing to depart forthwith, as it should please Him to appoint; testifying that all was right. And when, after much suffering, patiently endured for the Lord's sake, death came, she gently, and almost literally, fell *asleep* in Jesus. For having, with her husband, prayed for repose (after several hours of sickness), she composed herself as if for sleep; and in a position of apparent tranquillity thus lay, her breath becoming gradually fainter, until at a time that those around and watching her could scarcely specify, her spirit departed unto Jesus; and with Him, in Paradise, THERE is she.

After all, however, my dear brethren, it is *little* we can state concerning a *Christian's* life and death in so short a space as is allotted to a discourse like this; but even of the little I have stated I feel I must explain why I have done so.

And was it then with a view of glorifying her? No, my brethren, no. She is beyond our glorifying. God, we trust, has glorified her, and if so, then man's highest eulogy would but sully the brightness of her glory. She would little thank us for any effort to exalt her. She would feel that

such an effort would be to Christ dishonourable, to herself repulsive, and in us altogether unbecoming. What we have stated, then, was stated with a view of glorifying God *her Saviour*, and if it pleaseth Him, of leading you to seek that grace of God in Christ, which made her what she was. "*For Thine is the glory*," is our constant exclamation of praise to God, and "*By the grace of God I am what I am*," is the heartfelt acknowledgment of every true servant of the Lord.

Indeed, she was anxious about those very things on her dying bed. She was anxious *then* that we, whenever thinking of her, should glorify God, and seek God's grace in Christ.

To the end that we might glorify Him, she said (knowing that some had spoken of her good deeds), "*I much fear that an impression will go about that merit attaches to works. But, O my God, I know myself to be nothing but a poor, helpless, hell-deserving sinner, and have no hope but in my Lord and Saviour.*" In fact, she wished us to know that *that* was her *dying* testimony to *her Lord's* worth, and *her own* DEMERIT. She repeated it again and again, and the last time a few hours only before her death.

And to the end that we might be led of God to seek His grace in Christ (a grace she knew to be so rich, so free, so full, and so abundant for every poor sinner that flies to Jesus), she spoke to some personally on this point, and would have done so to many others, but failing of strength and opportunity, she left a solemn charge that her own relatives in particular, might be written to and exhorted to turn to the Lord: "And tell all the poor people from me," she said, "as you have opportunity, to '*seek the Lord while He may be found*,' and to '*call upon Him while He is near*.'"

O may we then, my dear brethren, be granted grace of God to glorify Him, and *that* by seeking of Jesus life, mercy, grace, and strength—now, at once, this very day, this very minute—*believing* in Him.

For, in the words of an extract listened to with much

pleasure by our departed sister some little time before her death, "Vain is all below the sun except the blessing of your Heavenly Father's love. The pleasures of this world pass away. The wisdom of this world is fading and dying. Time and sorrow are hastening by. Eternity is approaching. He only is blessed, who, looking beyond the shadows of time can exclaim, 'As for *me*, *I* shall behold Thy face in righteousness.' 'Thou shalt guide me with Thy counsel' *here*, and hereafter, O blessed hope! 'Thou shalt receive me,' even me, 'to glory.'"

Aye, and of such, my dear brethren, it is not a harrowing or doubtful question, after their departure, "Where is he?" but one grateful and full of blessedness to consider. For we can answer it, as we do of all who *die in the Lord*, saying, "They rest from their labours and stand before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes and with palms in their hands. They have come out of all tribulation, and have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb: therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve Him day and night in His temple: and He that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them. They shall hunger no more, neither shall they thirst any more: neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat: for the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them to living fountains of waters; and GOD SHALL WIPE AWAY ALL TEARS FROM THEIR EYES."

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